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This economic picture indicates that from early childhood, women had engaged in such physical labor that by 18 years of age they had strong muscles and backs through lifting, stooping, and squatting. Since to stop work during pregnancy was construed as laziness, women worked vigorously up to the day of delivery. If a woman were delivered during one of the hectic seasons, she might shorten her post-natal rest to whatever she thought was a safe minimum.

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Marriage

As people of the community often met at the temple, at ceremonies, and at work parties, there too young people met. Unmarried girls went freely and often alone on duties about the community, and also to Minburi to sell vegetables or take a load of paddy to the mill. To temple fairs and such they went in groups. Though parents hoped their children would marry within the community, a few young people "married out."

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Girls were married between 17 and 27 or so, most frequently around 21 to 23. Since boys at 21 might have to serve 2 years in the army, and were urged to spend as well at least a few months in the priesthood, their marriages took place between 22 and 30, most often around 24 or so. Parents were in no hurry to marry off their grown children at the very age when their productivity was funneling wealth back into the family. However, if male help in the family were short, parents were more receptive to suitors. No girl was married against her wishes nor to a stranger.* Marriages might be arranged through formal conversations opened by the man's family and carried on through a go-between, but the girl had the final say. A secret agreement between the partners might even precede negotiations. About half of the marriages were elopements, sometimes arranged because negotiations were dragging, sometimes to avoid the higher costs of more formal arrangements. Marriage, though largely based on socio-economic factors (Phillips:87) was not devoid of personal esteem. Sharp (Bang Chan data at Cornell) has a note on the desirable qualities in a husband as viewed by women. "Sexual virility," last on the list, was minimized in relation to such qualities as "religiousness," "wealth," "industriousness," which headed the list.

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*. A person who uses magical means to force an unwilling woman's love "will be born 500 times as a mad dog."

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The Pre-natal Baby

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The baby's body "started as a hair." After conception it was necessary that the father, with his semen during intercourse "strengthen" the baby. There was less, if any, intercourse in the last weeks of pregnancy, though no prohibition against it. Food eaten by the mother, "transformed into blood," built the baby's body. For the first 3 months the child was a "clump of blood." By the third month the mother felt a shaking (sàn) at the clump. This was the "khwan soul flitting in and out of the baby's heart." The picture of pre-natal growth was expressed by the chant at the tonsuring ceremony:

> "The body of a child inside its mother's womb grows gradually like droplets of oil coagulating at the end of the yak's hair. The 5 apertures appear, the nose, 7 ears, and 2 eyes; and then the hair, hands, and feet. The infant's hands embrace its placenta from which it sucks water day and night. There it sits on its mother's faeces while her newly eaten foods pack closely on its head. Its chin rests upon its knees, its face is turned toward the mother's back as it leans back against her belly. It looks like a monkey in the rain, sitting, waiting, trying to warm itself in a hole at the foot of a tree" (S.S.).

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Before birth (and after), the baby was weak and tender (ɔ̀n), with especially soft, thin skin.

The Pregnant Woman

In pregnancy, a woman saw herself as moving toward the fulfillment of her long adumbrated female office[23] of nurturer. The essence of her femaleness, to be "soft and yielding, to lengthen life by nourishing others" was heightened.

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23. To paraphrase Fortes: "office," subsuming both status and role, means "calling, occupation, or life-task." It serves "instrumental or utilitarian ends," yet also has the "other dimension of duty and responsibility enjoined, sanctioned and above all symbolized in ceremonial or ritual forms placing it in the moral order" (Fortes:82).

• 843 She was "more sensitive, tender, and delicate," and more vulnerable to outside influences, both good and bad. For her goal of nourishing a beautiful child, her greater sensitivity gave her the means. Because of the physical unity of mother and child, her every sight, sound, touch, taste or smell, every thought and action reacted on the child. Out of compassion she sought out beautiful sights and avoided ugly ones; she behaved virtuously and tenderly. As the tonsure-chant put it:

> "A child's skin is as soft as cotton. His mother dares not eat hot-tasting foods lest they burn this tender skin and make him suffer. Awake or asleep, she is careful in sitting and reclining lest he be hurt inside. She is merciful, and sensitive for her child. His pain is like that of a tiny helpless bird being clubbed by savage hunters. She will not taste incompatible foods, nor the sweet nor the peppery, even though she thirsts for them...." (S.S.).

She took every opportunity to associate herself with words or actions which implied success in situations analogous to parturition. For instance, in order that her child would "come out" more easily she cooked and ate a lotus bud, carried by monks and chanted over, especially those used at the termination of Buddhist Lent, when the monks "came out" (ɔ̀k) of their sequestration (Textor:169-170).

The father, too, shared in the responsibility, for it took both a father and a mother to bring forth a child. Quarrels were avoided for they made for a quarrelsome child. A man was particularly enjoined to help by keeping his wife in a happy mood. The father's industriousness in collecting wood for his wife's post-partum fire made for an industrious child. As a good example for the child and for their own "merit," a pregnant woman and her husband chanted prayers (mon;skt:mantra) at night together before retiring. Thus their child would be "easy to raise" (Textor 1966:87).

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On the other hand, pregnancy was a period of uncertainty when a woman was easily upset emotionally. Because childbirth was "like a war" when a woman might die, "defeated by her pregnancy"(phaethong), she felt uneasy.[24] If she were frightened, her child's khwan would fly off in terror. The baby died in the womb if its khwan did not return. Because of increased sensitivity and vulnerability her elements and those of the baby were frequently thrown off balance. Wind easily entered through the thin skin of her stomach where she carried the unborn child. It caused pre-natal disorders all the way from queasiness and minor vomiting in early pregnancy to miscarriage and death. "A woman felt dizziness and numbness because of wind in the fetus. In a month she suffered a miscarriage."

A pre-natal pain that did not seem to be a labor-pain was diagnosed as the very dangerous naen, "a thick lump of blood and wind that moved quickly." As in other illnesses, element harmony was restored by medicines, holy water, and by modifications of diet.

Women knew of possible supernatural invasions of the womb during pregnancy. If a woman had beforehand lost a baby at birth or through miscarriage, and the body had not been properly buried, she might be seriously troubled by its restless ghost, fully as powerful, it must be remembered, as an adult's.

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24. The image of battle was traditional (cf. Anuman Rajadhon: 108). Phaethong (McF: 599), a combination of food craving and vomiting (Anuman Rajadhon:115) paralleled the dola-duka of Ceylon (cf. Obeyesekere), but without the hostilities built in by the Sinhalese.

843 [775] She might also be troubled by the ghost of anyone who had died violently. This ghost, a phi tai thang klom, caused "the worst of all possible deaths." The phi krasu spirit,[25] entering through her anus, also might cause death by consuming her faeces, organs or the child's entrails. It was more dangerous during and after childbirth than during pregnancy (Textor:304-320). The supernatural disease missile called "khun" might also strike. "If the mother is under 9 months pregnant, the baby inside can protect (itself). If this happens during the ninth month, the doctor uses holy water to extract it at the time of birth." Khun was recognized by "extra pain occurring just before the baby comes out." To protect themselves, women wore extra talismans or had 7 dots tattooed under the arm.

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843 845 There was no assumption that what was born was inevitably to be human. When people said of a woman who had died pregnant, "the child ate the mother;" or, at a miscarriage, "the mother ate her child," or if many of a couple's children died, "they eat their children," the charge might be merely the comment of a vituperous neighbor, but the reality of vicious, autonomous beings, human or otherwise, in the womb was unmistakable. A certain woman died pregnant. The fetus, removed surgically, was observed to have 7 visible teeth, which indicated it was a non-human, yak (giant). However, a child might also be the soul of an angel in the form of a falling star that entered the womb in the advanced stages of pregnancy. "If such a baby lives it is pure and is a very wonderful child." Episodes were described of woman giving birth to "gold," "jewels," "a monkey," "a fish's stomach," and a mouse-like "Golden Child." Sometimes these

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[771] [783] [514] [262] 25. This spirit ate like a dog, not like a human being, in eating faeces and putrid meat (McF.48). No revulsion nor idea of filth and contamination was found in Bang Chan's attitudes about faeces or urine. The infant in the womb sat peaceably on the mother's faeces. It was lucky to dream of faeces. In daily life human and animal excretions, like sins at the festival of Loy Krataung, were carried away by the canal waters. Bang Chan Buddhists recognized a need for cleansing, but not for purification. Since neither faeces nor sins were filthy the water was not contaminated. Even putrid meat was not disgusting in the context of the perishability of the flesh, but as food it was revolting. Muslims, however, had built in contamination to their concept of sin, so required purification.

Sometimes these aberrancies were viewed as desirable sources of supernatural power, but on other occasions, they were seen as a sign of demerit, caused embarrassment, and were suffocated at once (if alive), and buried. 845 847

If a woman died pregnant, her body was at once brought to the temple where the unborn child was removed surgically. The usual solacing sermon, rites "to lead the deceased to live in her right place in the next world," and cremation took place, with the fetus laid beside its mother so that it "would come out normally." The mother and child were separated to prevent a ghost which was double-powered. No prayers were chanted at home before exsection "lest they make the power of the spirit stronger." Moreover, any violent or premature death caused an angry ghost. The ghost of a premature child had a heavy load of sin, for its stay in purgatory, where sin was worked off, had been interrupted (Textor:262). An unscrupulous mɔ̄ was eager to get possession of any ghost for use in sorcery, and a double ghost was stronger than any other. Ghosts were obtained by plundering the mortuary chambers of the temple prior to cremation. By feeding (liang) it, a mɔ̄ controlled it. The ghost of a male infant was preferable because it was "stronger than that of a female." In the light of this situation, not only should the body of a pregnant woman never be left alone " so that no one can get at them (sic)," but a pregnant woman herself ought not to be alone.[26] The behavior towards the Rice Goddess, Mother Posop, who was "pregnant" when the grains in the stalk filled out, illuminated many of these attitudes: "Mae Posop feels weak, hungry, and uneasy. She is eager to taste sour and sweet foods. She is a woman and beautiful in her pregnancy." To allay her hunger the 845 766 [775] 845 775 754 775 843 782 [754] 843 782 776

26. In Cambodia, a pregnant woman might be murdered, even by her husband, so that the murderer might gain the malevolent power that possession of her now double soul would afford. (E.R.E. "Cambodia": p.159). This specific statement was not found in Bang Chan but might be part of the shadowy background to local reluctance to leave a pregnant woman alone. [171]

1: Hanks E-5 (1953-1954) 1964 . AO7 Central Thai AO7

843 782 776 farmers brought to the fields an offering of two kinds of bananas (kluai hŏm and kluai namwâ), sugar cane, taro, young coconut and cakes; and fresh earth burned and offered with oranges and other kinds of fruit."[27] She was also given the things "dear to women": new clothing, perfume, face-powder, hair lotion and a mirror. In the annual harvest ritual, when some woman (never a man) escorted the Goddess from the field to the rice bin, participation was forbidden to a pregnant woman because "the Goddess-Mother might be jealous of the woman's heightened beauty" and so be malevolent. Also, "being now emotionally weak and easily upset, a woman might be frightened by seeing the Goddess, who, after all, is close to being a spirit (phî).

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843 262 The prominence of food cravings in this traditional description leads to a consideration of diet in pregnancy.

Diet in Pregnancy[28]

As long as everything went well, pregnant women "ate as usual." The underlying premise was that each woman early in childhood had established a regular diet suitable to her individual make-up of elements, and eliminated foods that because they did not agree with her or were disliked, were judged "not compatible." A woman could eat as usual because the ordinary daily foods, rice, coconut, etc., were "safe." The modifications introduced to beautify and protect the mother and baby were made on the basis of the properties and

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27. The goddess was following traditional "defeated by one's pregnancy" (phêethông [Mc.F: 599]) symptoms of desiring "sour, salty, or strange things such as burnt earth." Like any woman, her craving for sweets indicated that a heavenly creature was to be born; for fruits, that she would bring forth an animal; for burnt earth, that the god Brahma would be born (Anuman Rajadhon 1961:115-116).

[114] 28. This section does not purport to present a dietary study in modern nutritional terms. Hauck's study (1959) of maternal and child health gives information on foods eaten, craved, disliked, or viewed as "good for" or "not good for" women during child-bearing, and also on illnesses found among pregnant women, including beri-beri, nausea, cramps, and fainting. The data here add to her information on behavior and stress traditional views as to the purpose of the dietary injunctions.

843 262

qualities of foods. Chili peppers were avoided because they "burned the baby's skin." The cooling kluai namwa banana ensured a cool-tempered child. The fact that one woman ate cobra curry and suffered heat, while another took it comfortably, indicated, however, that what was bad for one might not be bad for another. Individuality of constitutional make-up explains why views varied considerably on proper diet in pregnancy and lactation (cf. Hauck 1959:2,16). Those who were eying urban ways added to the variety by occasionally following modern medical advice. A schoolteacher, for instance, ate eggs regularly and during pregnancy----not the "old way."

Women were urged to eat a great deal for they were eating for 2.[29] Cravings were not compelling, but to increase food intake, preferences were indulged, even when involving out-of-season fruits, expensive, or "dangerous" items (Hauck, 1959:14).[30] "A pregnant woman can eat any kind of food because she is sailing on a tremendous ocean [a traditional phrasing, cf. Anuman Rajadhon:108)]. No one can predict whether she will live or die. One wants to eat chicken and kills it herself. Another has dreams and nightmares about craving certain food." She who flouted the Buddhist prohibition on taking life and killed a chicken to eat was not critisised. She was shouldering

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29. "To increase the appetite" was of frequent concern (cf. Hauck, 1959:27, and Sharp et al., 1953:256-260). Food in quantity and the appetite to consume it was one of the main props of social relationships and of personal security (L.M. Hanks, 1963). [571]

30. Some of the likes and dislikes mentioned turned out to be a recitation of the traditional food injunctions set down in the old "textbook," Promcindas, quoted by Phya Anuman Rajadhon (116). That fresh fish tastes and odors were the most frequent dislikes (Hauck, 1959:14) should be seen alongside the following "symptom of pregnancy sickness: if the mother desires to eat meat and fish and raw things----a creature of hell has come to be born" (ibid:116). Such an idea might well discourage the eating of fresh fish and underlie Yong Chutima's statement that "women were supposed to eat less meat than men" (quoted in Hauck, et al.,1958:42), and found as a prevalent attitude in Cha Chung Sao (H.M.H.). The out-of-season fruits, Chinese noodles (an expensive or party fare) and hot foods (dangerous) fit certain craving-categories of Obeyesekere (pp. 338-339).

843 262 [184] sin for the sake of nourishing the child. Some Thai village women followed a local Chinese belief that eating a female chicken gave strength during pregnancy. Eating a rooster, though, caused miscarriage through "estopic gestation." Thai Muslims recommended chicken whole-heartedly.

843 278 Medicines

Beginning early in pregnancy, one or more kinds of medicine (yā) were taken. These hot-tasting medicines of ginger, galanga, pepper, and such in 28 per cent alcohol were either bought from the big selection at a Chinese drugstore, or were made up at home from alcohol or water and an envelope of ingredients. A woman made the choice herself with the advice of experienced persons. Even the Muslims who ordinarily frowned on alcohol permitted their women to take it at this time. A few women, though, said they "did not like to get drunk," so took their medicines in hot water. The quantity varied from two to six spoonfuls per day, with big increases as delivery approached, e.g. "two big cups a day of it during the ninth month."

The primary purpose of medicine was to increase the appetite, but there were other reasons. Fragrant Medicine (yā hauaum) cured wind. One Muslim midwife's mixture "stimulated the amniotic fluid." Other preparations had more general objectives. One label advertised "strength and good blood to men and beauty to women;" another promised to "maintain the mother's body and make the inner organs do their work properly" (H.M.H.).

In the last months, the reason for the medicines was to build up the body's heat. This purpose was not affected by hot tastes, which burned but did not necessarily raise the heat, but rather by alcohol, cobra, and specific decoctions. A label cautioned, though, "Not to be used by pregnant women with fever," lest the increment of heat be excessive. Snake Brand medicine, an exceedingly hot concoction used primarily post-partum, was occasionally taken in mild dosage during pregnancy. (Used full strength it caused miscarriage, so was rumored to induce abortion). The heat raised the body's temperature far above the ordinarily desired coolness so as to implement birth.

844 826 The Physiology of Birth

At parturition the body's usual needs were reversed. The child could not be ejected under the normal, cool condition of the body. The pushing and pulling winds inside the body that ordinarily circulated slowly had to be

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speeded up with heat to the point of blasts. The strength of the contractions of labor was in direct proportion to the speed of the winds' circulation. The great pushes of the expulsive lom beng "broke down" the sac with the amniotic fluid (nam thūn hua: water-that-supports-the-head-of-the-child), and forced out the child, water, and the placenta.

After the child was out, the mother was cold, weak, and exhausted. Her uterus was full of harmful fluids. Heat was needed more than ever not only to warm her but to give the winds "the power and push" to drive out three undesirable birth-waters: "The blood that looks like ordinary blood but is bad,"; the amniotic and abdominal body water (nām khram:refuse water); and the pale, viscous, repugnant "fish-water" (nam khāo plā). Therefore, a hot fire was built, close to which the mother lay (yu fai), turning all sides of her body towards the flame. She bathed in or drank hot or warm boiled water (nam suk: cooked, or ripe, water). She ate safe foods like rice and dried fish,[31] and kluai nam bananas, continued to take alcoholic medicines of the hottest sort, such as Snake Brand, and occasionally might be given cobra or other hot curries to eat. For a first-born, a woman stayed eleven or nine days by the fire (always an odd number), with stays shorter for each successive child, but never less than five days.

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Complications sometimes developed because of inadequate control of the heat. A "headache and a hot body" indicating "stagnation of the blood and the fishy-smelling-water," was cured by a heat-producing decoction. Rashes often occurred, causing small boils that might develop into sores. To soothe these, turmeric was painted on. In the most dangerous cases the heat "drove the bad blood to the heart, to the face or belly" where it was recognized by serious swelling, with resulting madness or death. In fact, one mō felt that the

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31. The reasons for rejecting fresh fish during pregnancy ("lest a creature of hell be born") would not hold after parturition. Yet fresh fish was rejected then too "as bad for the womb." One suspects that the less odorous dried fish was substituted so that the odor of fresh fish, like air-borne, incompatible food, would not affect adversely the "fish-smelling" post-partum discharge (nam khāo plā). In Hauck's list of foods "bad for mother during the post-partum rest," the reasons are apparent: Sour tastes did not dry out the body, but built up water; egg was too cooling; jackfruit brought in wind; glutinous rice and the sugar of sweets "wet the uterus;" fruits did not give strength and were excessively cooling (cf. Hauck,1959:18).

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Chapter IV

THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

843 [592] [342]

Dūan and her husband, Song, had a 2 year old son, Chai.[32] They lived and worked with her widowed mother, Lek, and her unmarried sister, Mī. The comfortable house stood high on piles, surrounded by rice fields. On a nearby mound lived Sāi, 60 years old and full of energy, the youngest sister of her grandmother.

Now Dūan noticed that again her menses had stopped. Her mother had described before her marriage what this meant. With happiness in her eyes, as the first time, she told her husband, then her mother, and at the first opportunity, her husband's parents. There was no reason to keep her pregnancy secret. Since she and Song would be happy to have either a boy or a girl, she did not seek out the ritual means which existed to induce a child of a particular sex.

During the months of anticipation, Dūan worked along as usual in farming and house-keeping. Lek reminded her of prudent behavior. "Women are easily upset when pregnant. It is up to you to put yourself in a cheerful mood. Everything you do will affect the infant in your womb. If you see a scarred person, your child will be scarred. Be calm, look only at pleasant things and avoid jerky motions. Do not overeat, lest the child be a glutton. If you sleep during the day and are inactive, you will also have a lazy child. Some girls are trying to be like Bangkok people, pleading that they cannot do heavy work in the last few weeks of pregnancy, but that will cause a difficult labor."

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To increase her appetite, early in her pregnancy Dūan visited a Chinese pharmacist to get medicine. He had so

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32. This account puts together data from several informants. Particularly illuminating phrasings are quoted exactly, over and above the conversations, which, though fictionalized, are also direct transcriptions.

843 278 many kinds she hardly knew which to choose. He also had all-purpose kits for mother and baby, even one with 14 different kinds of medicine "to control the body's temperature and keep the organs functioning"(H.M.H.). She decided on one of the favorites, pickled medicine (ia dawaung), and from then on took a spoonful twice a day. She avoided all peppery-hot foods which would "damage the delicate complexion of the infant in the womb, burn off its hair, and maybe even kill it." Some women said they craved sweet, hot, or sour foods, but Dūan did not. A friend who had never eaten cobra curry so longed for its hot taste during her pregnancy that her mother gave her a small dish. She could not resist secretly finishing the whole pot! What heat and sleeplessness! To cool herself, she had sat in the canal. The baby, saved only because its mother drank the water from a young coconut fruit, "could resist the cobra heat because it was 6 months along, but even so, it shed its skin at birth." But another woman, pregnant 7 months with her third child, also craved cobra curry, ate a lot, and said she did not feel hot. Nothing at all happened! The second woman was nearer to delivery, so stood the heat better, but more important, each individual was different. Because of virtue and sin in former lives each woman--and man, too--was born under different astral confluences and had lived and suffered differently.

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843 759 About the seventh month, Dūan pondered who should help her at her delivery. Some of her friends were delivered by their own mothers, but Lek had undertaken the delivery of another daughter's child, and the baby had died in an hour. Dūan suspected that her mother, therefore, would prefer not to do it, and knew that she herself would feel uneasy. So she decided for safety's sake to ask a midwife. She and Song could well afford the ceremonial offering with its customary 20 or so baht, even though the midwife said it was "as you please." A great many women never consulted with a midwife beforehand at all, but just sent word to the nearest one when the pains started or when trouble was encountered. Midwives varied in their capabilities, however, and Dūan wanted not only a good one but someone she knew well. Muslim midwives were said to be skilled, but they happened to live too far from her. Dūan decided to ask her elder aunt, Sāi, who was a well known midwife. Everything was right about Sāi She had experienced hands, a true desire to help, and effective magic; and she was a relative. Best of all, her own babies had eaten and slept well, had cried little, and now were grown to maturity. With such proof of merit, capabilities, and fortunate relations with supernatural powers, what better person to help Dūan start her baby on its earthly existence? Actually, if something happened, and Sāi could not come, Dūan knew she would not be alone or unassisted. Almost every woman, and quite a few men, had

seen childbirth not once, but many times, so willing hands abounded. So, one day, Dūan went to Sāi. "Will you help me, and come when I call you? Please do not go far at that time." Sāi agreed, knowing in her heart she had expected to care for Dūan. No day could be calculated because the baby decided when to be born. Dūan came home very fast, for doing so would help ensure a fast delivery.

As the weeks passed, Song, the new child's father, collected outside the house a great cone of sakāe firewood from their land. This wood was for the post-partum fire beside which Dūan would lie for many days. As the fire had to be very hot, a great deal of wood was needed, all to be collected beforehand. Song also covered the outside of the pile with thorny woods to keep away evil spirits. On her part, Dūan knew that everything needed for delivery was ready in the house as part of the regular household staples or utensils. Nothing need be bought except possibly a little Borneo camphor to mix with lemon grass for faintness, and alum. The midwife should never bring anything with her because it was essential to use what was in the house. Anything lacking could be quickly borrowed after the pains started. The little cushion on which the baby was to lie was cut, and half-filled with kapok. It was not sewn up, lest it induce by example a closed-up exit from the womb, or suggest a mal-placed or deformed baby which had to be delivered onto a pillow. No one wanted to prepare for such an unhappy event. No clothing was bought for the child ahead of time for then the child might die, and all would have to be destroyed.

Dūan felt at ease and yet somewhat frightened at the prospect of the pain ahead. At an ordination she attended one night she listened again to the chant she had heard many times:

> "In childbirth a woman has pain all over her body...She is losing her soul and feels so frightened, despairing, and suffering that she throws herself up and down from time to time as if her mind were terribly wounded by the poisonous arrow of a hunter. She is uneasy and moans loudly as if a big mountain had fallen down upon her, and she is supposed to wait for death. She does not recover even if massaged by someone. She does not think of her pain, but tries to save the child's life, when, after the pushing wind comes, he is born" (S.S.).

On other occasions she pondered the deep satisfaction of her maternal role, then laughed in recalling a crafty woman who

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844 "faked labor pains to hold down her errant husband!" or so a sour mother-in-law said (Hauck,ibid.).

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789 Finally, one day, Dūan felt uncomfortable and decided not to go out to plow. Lek prepared for her hot-tasting medicine. When Song came in at eleven from work, he went to the garden, to the little house of the family's protecting spirit (gān phra phūm), lighted incense and offered flowers, asking that it and the ancestors help his wife and keep away evil ghosts. He also prayed for help of the ancestors. Mī went to ask Sāi not to go far away that day and to ask in what exact direction to push over the woodpile. Sāi replied, "Push it over in the direction the snake lies today, so that Dūan and the wood lie parallel with their heads and its apex in the same direction to the north and east. Never let them be to the south and west." A passing boatman saw the wood go over. "There's news to tell!" he said. "The child is being born!" Dūan thought she ought to send away her little son, but he refused to go, and stayed by his mother the whole time. Song's sister came by for a visit, but stayed to help after getting word to their parents. It was no time for visitors, especially men, but any helpers, male or female, were welcome. Lek prepared the all-important ceremonial gift, the khwan khāo (soul-rice), for the midwife, which validated, and insured the use of, her private magic. She put a bunch of bananas, 7 betel pepper leaves, 7 areca nuts, flowers, incense sticks, a candle, and 20 baht into a bowl filled with dry rice grains. A little later she strung the holy thread around the 4 walls of the house. On each side she attached "yan," (Skr.: yantra). These protective cloths, about 10 inches square with magical letters and drawings, kept away the terrifying phī krasū spirits, seen as lights at night, who, attracted by bad smell and blood, would creep up the housepost, eat Dūan's blood, intestines, and faeces through her anus. Then Mī went again to Sāi to report that "the pain was increasing." These words were the signal to Sāi that it was time for her come.

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As Dūan was to profit from the magic, it was better that she herself hand the midwife the khwan khāo bowl. Sāi lit the incense and offered the bowl in gratitude to the teacher who had given her her magic. She whispered in the direction of Dūan's head, "All good spirits in the high heavens and in the locality, help and do not obstruct at this delivery! Give happiness to mother and baby!" Placing the bowl on a high place to the side of Dūan's head, she said, "My teacher is long since dead, but will hear this request, and will pass the request and the khwan khāo to her teacher, and so on, back all those thousands

by instruction from a ritually[71] approached teacher. "One cannot accidentally learn. One has to ask to be taught." As a practitioner in this field, the title "mɔ̄" signalized expertise; where teaching was involved, the title was khrū (teacher [McF. 183]) or ācān (professor [McF.990]). Speech was the key to this tradition, in spite of sacred books and wall-carvings in the temples.[72] Modern education, being book-and-teacher based, shared in this aura. There, even today, listening is more comfortable than reading.

Techniques of the practical, natural world were learned not by teaching but pragmatically by observation, example and experience. Eyes were the key. "I know because I saw," said a midwife. At the highest level of achievement in the natural world one was expert (nak), e.g. convict (nak thōt, an expert in being punished) a tourist (nak thīeo, an expert in roaming around).[73] Within the natural world, an intense pragmatism reigned always emphasizing visual phenomena. People were keenly

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71. To speak ritually one held in the hand the trio of incense, flowers, and a candle. This was the way to cross over from the profane to the sacred world, to inform (bɔ̄k) or make a request of, a sacred being (a teacher, priest, king, or deity). The tiny flame of the offering invoked holy fire, and so had the effect of making one's words compelling, for no one could gainsay a request under such circumstances. A husband about to deliver his wife held incense, flower, and candle in hand as he requested the help of ancestors and spirits. (Bishop Pallegoix saved the existence of his mission by thus approaching the King [Pallegoix, Vol. 2:201]). The trio of offerings, whether at the 4 corners of the lying-in fire-floor, or in "bat phlī krathong" at a "tham khwan" rite, or even in an ordinary khwan khao made all actions and words compelling.

72. Because words, immaterial and invisable, lay at the base of occultism, words as continuous agents of power permeated Bang Chan's ordinary daily life. This was why words, verbal play, and punning initiated action: pregnant women attended the monks' "coming out of retreat" (ɔ̄k phansā) so that the child would "come out" (ɔ̄k) easily.

73. It should not be forgotten that most activities in the supernatural world had their technical sides, and the term "nak" was used there too. A curer had to learn his herbs; a dancer, his steps; and a master of ceremonies, the words of the chants.

759 the slight differences in ministrations. "The Muslim mid-
795 wife massages more than the Buddhist." The women easily
844 entered into reciprocal courtesies. The Muslim woman knew
571 the steps in the Buddhist winnowing ceremony and performed
[852] them as desired. One Buddhist mother dispensed, however, with the winnowing "because the midwife was Muslim." A Buddhist woman made up the khwan khāo in the fashion specified by the Muslim midwife and participated in the latter's teacher-rite.

795 Certain fundamental ideas of the Muslims led to rein-
779 terpretations of familiar Buddhist terms and activities.
[774] "Khwan" referred to the soul, but with no implication of reincarnation. "Bun," meaning "merit" to the Buddhist,
[782] meant charitable giving in the sense of tithes, for Islam prescribed that a portion of one's income be given to the poor. On the other hand, the Muslims had taken over many
[177] Buddhist practices: for one, the acceptance of Buddhist holy water as a cure for spirit attack.

795 Completely Muslim was the stress on physical and
[783] moral purification as an objective of every rite, and conversely, the prevalence of the idea of defilement.
[304] "Circumcision is to cleanse the body before growing up," it was said. Muslim mortuary rites were elaborate pro-
[764] cedures for purification. When a Muslim baby died, the Buddhist midwife said, "The body was cleaned before
[831] burial," implying thorough measures beyond his ordinary experience. Procreation was viewed as dangerous and
[834] contaminating. The behavior that hid sexual phenomena at the same time by constant prescriptions kept sexuality
[562] much more in mind. Muslims separated males from females, for example, at feasts. No Muslim male ever became a midwife.

795 The events surrounding childbirth illustrated the
843 differing viewpoints between Muslim and Buddhist. In the
844 seventh month of her pregnancy, a Muslim woman called on on her chosen midwife, and gave her a gift of betel pepper leaves and areca nut to assure her services (fāk
[273] khong: to deposit gold). On returning home, she went as fast as possible "to insure fast delivery." Since Muslims frowned on liquor, their medicines were made up of hot-tasting spices in hot water. Yet one Muslim mid-
795 wife prescribed large doses of liquor before and during
844 parturition. For labor and delivery, a Muslim was stricter about utilizing the privacy of the small enclos-
[562] ed room, if there were one, while in the Buddhist household "it could be anywhere" in the house. Muslim men, except for husband, brother, or father, were excluded from the scene. The Muslim khwan khāo contained "7

262 888 understood that her merit helped her not to be hungry. Once she asked an eminent layman about eating at night. He said, "If you are not hungry, do not eat. If you feel hungry, it is better to eat. If someone invites you to eat, it is sinful to refuse."

261 Even young adults had a strong revulsion against gluttony. One of the symptoms of a man who went mad and had to be committed to an institution was that "he ate too much." A woman was despised because "she ate in secret. She stole eggs from her husband, sold them in the market, and then spent the cash on food which she ate there, instead of bringing it home." Definitions of a glutton were, "A 'with-rice' eater," or simply as "one who eats alone." These comments highlight the counsels of eating in moderation and in company. On the other hand, a full stomach was valued for "home is where one eats one's fill."

262 562 262 [220] [853] At maturity, when farm and other tasks were shared as equals, men and women ate almost the same food. The old proscription against animal food for women was somewhat relaxed, but not entirely. To sustain farmers during the seasons of hard work, however, extra quantities of rice and rice alone, were considered essential. "With-rice" was pleasant but not so necessary. Any shift away from a diet of rice as ordinarily cooked in Bang Chan was construed as a shift either in occupation or in health. For example an eminent citizen who gave up farming took to eating (3)khaaw (3)tom often. This soupy rice, a staple dish for infant feeding, had interesting socioeconomic connotations. It was served as a light lunch to cooperative farm-workers to be followed at the day's end by a real meal. It was also "delicate" food, suitable for the sick, for city-people, for those who did not toil with their hands and backs. Consequently, when this man ate this "delicate food" more often, he was consciously or unconsciously serving notice on the community that he was not going to do farm work any more, for (3)khaaw (3)tom could not possibly have sustained a farmer's strength. Caustic villagers hinted that he was putting on airs.

262 843 846 Among conditions in which some change from the usual diet was found were pregnancy, post parturition and lactation. Relatively few foods were generally considered to be tabooed under any of these conditions, but many women preferred to limit intake to "safe" foods if there were any possibility that certain foods might cause harm.

[124] Information was obtained from 42 mothers about the food they ate during the post-partum rest period. Two said they ate as usual, but for the remainder, the diet was considerably

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[192] 1. Literally "beautiful rice." For method of cooking, see p. 33.

262 curtailed. About half ate soupy rice rather than rice as
843 usually prepared. All ate fish, but over half ate salted
846 fish only, and about one-fourth ate fresh fish only. Rice and fish were apparently the only foods considered safe by all of these mothers. The only other food eaten by half or more of them was banana of the (4)nam-(4)waa variety, baked bananas being commonly specified. Vegetables, when they were eaten, were usually in (1)kaeaeng (1)liang, a broth made with dried fish, and reputed to be valuable for milk stimulation. In Bang Chan, the inflorescence of banana was commonly used in making this product, but other vegetables were favored by some. When asked what foods they considered good for a woman who had recently borne a child, no mother knew of any such food, but the list of foods mentioned as being bad for the mother during the post-partum rest period included more than a dozen items mentioned from 1 to 4 times each: egg, sweets, beef, vegetables, meat, pork, poultry, fresh fish, sour tasting foods, jackfruit, mangoes, fruits of all kinds, and glutinous rice.

262 Fear of illness from eating incompatible foods after
846 child birth was rather strongly expressed by many informants,
753 even by some who knew of Chinese customs which were different
829 from the ancient Thai customs. Some also knew that foods which were customarily forbidden to the woman who had her child at home in the village, were not forbidden at the government health and maternity center at Minburi.

126 The 45 mothers who were interviewed during lactation,
262 but after work had been resumed, ate more nearly the usual
846 diet than was the case during the post-partum rest period. As in pregnancy, the mothers apparently had no notion of special dietary needs during lactation, but foods considered undesirable during lactation were mentioned 27 times. The list included 12 kinds of food, and four attributes of food, i.e. sour and hot tastes, fermented foods and raw foods. No food was considered harmful by a majority of mothers, the one which occurred most frequently, jackfruit, being mentioned by 8 only of the 45 informants.

262 Reasons were seldom advanced for considering various
753 foods unsuitable for mothers or children. During pregnancy,
853 the hot-tasting foods, i.e. those made with chili, were said by one informant to injure the baby's complexion. When asked at what age a child could have adult food, mothers might say at one or two years, but often specified without giving a reason, that the child could have anything but the hot-tasting foods. A reason given for omitting jackfruit from the diet during lactation was that it would cause diarrhea in the baby. One informant said that if a mother nursing a young baby, 1 or 2 months old, ate fresh vegetables, the baby would have diarrhea. Some informants said the "fragrant banana"[1] caused

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1. The type of banana most familiar to people in the United States.

3:Hauck et al. D-5 (1952-1954) 1959 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

SUMMARY

124 Information on health, care, and diet of mothers and small
125 children in Bang Chan, Thailand, was obtained primarily by interview, although some direct observations were made. In general, three areas of inquiry were included in this study: 1) clinical history, especially such information as might have a bearing on the nutrition and health of the child, 2) food intake at various periods, and 3) cultural customs and ideas of interest in relation to the Cornell Thailand Project.

In all, 66 mothers of young children were interviewed. Information on diet during pregnancy, postpartum, and lactation was obtained from women who were either in the stage under discussion or had only recently passed through it.

The description of child feeding practices is based on records obtained concerning 57 children from birth to two years of age, a majority of whom were visited from 5 to 7 times.

Information on growth in height and weight is based on observations made on 71 children, most of whom were weighed and measured 6 or 7 times. Observations were made for 30 of these children both before and after weaning.

843 During pregnancy most women in Bang Chan continued to eat as usual. A few expressed cravings for certain foods, and a minority thought some kinds of food should not be eaten during pregnancy.

846 During the postpartum rest period most women ate a very restricted diet. Rice and fish, with salt, were the foods considered by all informants to be appropriate for this period.

853 As a rule, diet during lactation, after the mother resumed her usual work, was the customary family diet. A minority of informants mentioned foods which should not be eaten by a nursing mother.

164 Evidence of the need to improve diets in this region was
146 provided by the occasional occurrence of beriberi or the history of beriberi among mothers as well as by medical inspection and family dietary studies.

853 Breast feeding was the rule in Bang Chan. For a majority of infants observed, breast feeding was continued into the second year, and some were breast fed for more than two years. Few received animal milk after weaning.

124 Information on growth in height and weight is based on obser-
125 vations of 71 children, most of whom were weighed and measured 6 or 7 times. For 30 of these children, observations were made both before and after weaning.

HEALTH AND GENERAL CARE OF MOTHERS

145 Information obtained on menstrual history of girls and women in Bang Chan has been reported previously (Hauck, 1956). The median and modal reported age at menarche was 15 years with a range from 13 to 19 years.

163 Most married women in Bang Chan had children, and of 438 pregnancies reported by 84 mothers, over 90 per cent resulted in live births (Hauck, 1956).

• 843 Clinical History and Complaints During Pregnancy.
164 Most of the women interviewed reported no history of disease which might affect, or be affected by, nutritional status.

Four women had a history of beriberi; 3, a history of malaria; and one had active tuberculosis of which she later died. In relation to the current pregnancy, 6 women had minor complaints such as nausea in early pregnancy, faintness, and leg cramps. The physician considered these as probably physiological. Of the 4 women with more serious complaints, one who said she had pain in the abdomen and legs and difficulty in walking had manifest beriberi when seen a few days after delivery.

844 Delivery and Care of Mothers After Childbirth.
846 Information was obtained from 49 mothers concerning
125 delivery and care after childbirth. For 43 of these women, ages reported were as follows:

Reported Age (years)	Number of Mothers
20 or under	7
21-25	11
26-30	13
31-35	8
36-40	6
over 41	1

The mothers interviewed had borne from 1 to 13 children. For 8 of them, this was the first child; but 25, a majority,

Exposure of Infants to Sunlight.

854 Even during the rainy season sunshine was usually abundant in Bang Chan, but taking a baby out of doors at an early age was generally thought to involve some risk. Many houses had low or wide eaves, and an infant was usually kept in a cradle in the house where sunlight could not penetrate. When old enough to hold up its head while sitting astride an older person's hip, the infant might be carried about the compound by parents or older siblings. As the question was worded ("When did you take the baby outside the house?" or "At what age did you take the baby with you when you went out for pleasure?") the answer did not mean that the baby was taken out with any degree of regularity at the specified age. Most of the babies in this series had been taken outdoors by the time they were 3 months old, but 4 were a year or older when first exposed to [144] sunshine. Nevertheless, the physician found no evidence of rickets among the infants he examined.

One informant, a school teacher's wife, said she thought that taking the baby into the sunshine was not harmful; in fact she believed it made the baby stronger than usual. She thought, however, that too much exposure to sunshine might "bring cold into the baby" and she spoke of the beret as a protection against this.[1] In Bang Chan, an otherwise naked infant might wear a beret when being taken out of doors.

MATERNAL DIET

Diet During Pregnancy.

843 Of 31 mothers who furnished some information on diet during 242 pregnancy, 17 were pregnant when interviewed, and the remainder [125] had young infants, in most cases under 3 months of age. Eighteen of the interviews were based on schedule 4 (Appendix p. 53) and provided fairly detailed information on the kinds of foods eaten. Other informants gave more general information, such as foods craved or disliked.

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[191] 1. Wellin (1956) mentioned the small woolen cap made or bought by mothers in the Valley of Ica, Peru, for the infant to wear. The cap was put on soon after birth and was worn, off and on, for many months. The function of the cap was to prevent the entrance of cold via the fontanel, which was defined as a particularly vulnerable point of entry. Wellin noted that all infants he saw in maternity wards in the Valley of Ica wore woolen caps.

In general, the diet during pregnancy seemed to be about the same as at other times. Rice cooked in the usual way (see glossary, Appendix p. 51) and fish of some kind formed the basis of the diet. A majority had green vegetables[1] either daily or frequently. Foods which seemed to be generally acceptable, although they were eaten less often, included vegetables other than green ones, pork, bananas, coconut, other fruit, fresh beef, and egg. 843 843 262

Eight women spoke of foods which they craved during pregnancy. Fruit in general, or specific fruits such as oranges, pomelo, guava, rambutan, and mangosteen, were most often mentioned. One woman said she craved Chinese noodles, and one, chilies.

When asked whether they disliked any foods during pregnancy, 5 women mentioned fish or the odor of fish, but in 3 instances the objection was limited to early pregnancy when the informants experienced some nausea. Three said they disliked vegetables, and one, hot tasting foods.

Four informants said that hot tasting foods (i.e. foods containing chili peppers) were bad for a pregnant woman; one considered dried and salted fish harmful "because of their fishy odor." One informant thought eggs were bad for a woman during pregnancy. Eggs were, however, the only food mentioned by anyone in Bang Chan as being good for pregnant women. The informant, a woman school teacher, said she ate them often anyway, hence did not alter her intake during pregnancy.

Diet During the Postpartum Rest Period.

Of the 43 mothers from whom we obtained information about the food they ate during the postpartum rest period, only 3 said they ate as usual. One of these said she believed that if a mother ate small amounts of many different kinds of foods while lying by the fire, the child would not get diarrhea when he ate these foods for the first time. This woman worked outside the community and may not have acquired her belief about eating a variety of foods within the village. In any event, since her child died at five days of age, one would not expect this mother's eating behavior to have a liberalizing effect on the custom in 846 262

1. Most of the pregnant women were interviewed toward the end of the rainy season when swamp cabbage and (2)phag (2)ka-(2)cheed, the most popular leafy vegetables, were available. From our subsequent experience with the family dietary survey, one would expect that when canals were low, green vegetables would be eaten infrequently by pregnant women as well as by other members of the family.

Three reported eating eggs daily,[1] and about two-thirds of the women had them either occasionally or frequently. Animal foods other than fish or eggs were eaten infrequently by most nursing women.

Our questions about ideas concerning foods during lactation did not uncover any firmly established traditional behavior. No food was considered harmful by a majority of informants. In response to the question as to foods which should not be eaten during lactation, however, 12 kinds of food and 4 attributes of food (sour, hot tasting, raw, fermented) were mentioned 27 times. Jackfruit, the item which occurred most frequently, was mentioned 8 times, corn, 3 times, swamp cabbage and pork, twice each; other items such as legumes, beef, poultry, egg, pineapple, and chico, once only. When asked if they disliked any foods at this time 4 women mentioned a dislike for vegetables. One mother said that cooked foods (in contrast to raw ones) were good for a lactating woman. Our question about foods craved during lactation brought little response.

To sum up, the mother's diet during pregnancy and lactation often approximated the usual diet in Bang Chan. A few women said they craved certain foods during pregnancy and some mentioned foods disliked at that time. A number of food items and attributes of food were considered by some informants to be undesirable during pregnancy and lactation, but no item was mentioned so frequently as to be considered tabooed. During the postpartum rest period, however, a greatly restricted diet was common. Mothers apparently had no idea of special dietary needs during pregnancy or lactation.

FEEDING PRACTICES FROM BIRTH TO TWO YEARS OF AGE

This description of feeding practices is based on 256 interviews concerning 57 infants and small children. The majority of them were visited from 5 to 7 times each. Since, insofar as possible, we saw the babies at 3-month intervals, changes in feeding practices will be described by 3-month periods or multiples thereof. If each visit to a child is considered as unity, the 8 age groups from birth to two years included from 17 to 41 children each with 6 of the age groups including more than 30 individuals. Thus the data obtained may be assumed to provide a reasonable picture of baby feeding practices in Bang Chan, 1952-54, and of significant deviations therefrom.

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1. This does not mean that the mother ate a whole egg at one meal. Frequently one or two eggs might be used to prepare food for the entire family.

262 843 Reasons were seldom advanced for considering certain foods unsuitable for mothers or children. During pregnancy the hot-tasting foods, i.e. those made with chili, were said by one informant to injure the baby's complexion. When asked at what 262 855 753 age a child could have adult food, mothers might say at one or two years but often specified, without giving a reason, that they could have anything but the "hot-tasting" foods (foods seasoned with chili). Two mothers said the child could have "hot tastes" at one year, whereas one said not until the child was 3 years old. A majority did not specifically mention hot tasting foods either to include or to exclude them.

853 A reason given for omitting jackfruit from the diet during lactation was that it would cause diarrhea in the baby. One informant said that if a mother nursing a young baby 1 or 2 months old ate fresh vegetables, the baby would have diarrhea. Some informants said the "fragrant banana", (3)kluaj (5)hausum[1], caused constipation in infants, others that it caused diarrhea, whether eaten directly by the infant or by the mother.

753 The belief that eggs would cause dental caries and should 262 therefore be omitted from children's diets was expressed by the 853 mother in a poorly nourished family of low economic status.
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862 Opinions varied as to when children could be given "adult food". This was often, but not always, the age considered appropriate for weaning. As the question was worded it apparently implied that the child "could eat food as prepared for adults in the family" and did not necessarily exclude breast feeding, since children who "could have adult food" might still be nursing. The age at which a child could have adult food was sometimes related to stage of maturity as "when he can sit", "when he has teeth", or "when he can say (1)plaa (fish)".

262 Traditional and Modern Concepts of Rice Versus "With-Rice" in the Diet. - Rice is not only the basis of the adult diet in Thailand, but it has traditionally been regarded as the strength giving food par excellence. A portion of Chutima's (1939) description of the "old system" of diet follows:

> "Our children and young women are forbidden by ancient doctrine from eating any fair quantity of animal products, but must eat plenty of rice which is considered as the only true food, the others being only appetizers. And to stimulate the palate, large quantities of hot and irritating condiments (chilies and peppers principally) are consumed at every meal.

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1. The type of banana most familiar to people in the U.S.A.